“The possession of knowledge carries an ethical responsibility” – Explain this claim

The statement “The possession of knowledge carries an ethical responsibility” suggests that humans have the moral imperative to use their knowledge they obtain in the most ethical way. Two sides can be viewed such as, using their knowledge with other people to help one another or retain your knowledge to help that same person. In my opinion, the possession of knowledge does have an ethical responsibility yet in everyday life they may be factors that alter what is right and what is wrong.

It is complicated to determine what is correct and what is incorrect. The statement explains that with the knowledge an individual obtains it is his/hers responsibility to do what is best for the people he/she is surrounded by. In this essay I will be looking at the significance of certain AOK (Areas of Knowledge) to in different occupations to determine its impact in peoples daily lives.

With this claim there are various situations that we have to take into consideration, which are that people have different ethical values for one person a scenario might be morally correct in their eyes but for the opposing party this could be ethically unjust which is considered to be moral relativism.

Doctors are obliged to go through x amounts of years to become qualified. Humans recognize the knowledge a doctor must obtain whilst becoming qualified therefore we put our trust into their ethical judgment presuming they do the correct thing. However, there are certain aspects in which change these factors. For example, doctors who preform illegal organ transplants. There is a correlation between human society, as taking organs illegally from a more vulnerable person in exchange for money. Is one life more valuable than the other in this perspective? A person whose life is more “valuable” or who has more to live for is the one to save? Saving a 71-year-old man’s life and risking the life of a child. Perspective is both people live, both is high risk, both happy.

Kant’s theory states that the majority of people who are happy then that is the ethical solution. We have to consider that taking the organ away from a child or any other person affects their daily life routine, as they would have to live a limited life would force them to not partake in many normal child activities. On the other hand, the person accepting the organ would have a quicker transplant and be able to live a longer life with his family or friends. Looking at it from the donor perspective, he/she could be living a life of poverty. The organ donor would be likely to not have a good life and would need the money to support his/her family. This leads to the donor to having a happier life.

I believe that, with illegal organ transplants it has benefits in both viewpoints, as both of the people live a happier life, The donor with money to support her family although having to “play it safe” and the receiving patient having a healthier life. However, considering the possibilities of the transplants going wrong, how do we know that the donor doesn’t suffer from the disease the receiver is and therefore needs that specific organ. As well as if the receiver’s body doesn’t accept the organ leading to the donor needing another organ, which puts him/her in the same, position and the illegal actions were unnecessary. Although there are double standard situations in which can benefit both parties yet also jeopardizing them both.

With great knowledge comes with supporting the immoral. An individual who has committed a crime in which the law and society understands it’s ethically unacceptable yet a lawyer has to defend a person who has committed the felony. For example, Andres Behring Breivik accountable for the number of deaths in Oslo and Utoya having a lawyer to defend him even though he is responsible and guilty for all the people he had killed solemnly. Breivik’s lawyer being Norwegian and despite his intuition towards the incident which are most likely to be against Breivik’s actions, reason occurs as to him having to do his job. Breivik’s lawyer could be helping Breivik to get publicity through media as well as the payment received for defending such as case although society looks upon him as unjust due to him defending a man that has killed children as well as adults. Would the circumstances change if 80 plus people killed Breivik? That one person was guilty of a crime therefore needed to be punished for the action, would society look upon the homicide as beneficial cause since the majority of the community believed this was morally just? Nonetheless, Breivik had to be defended by some professional to either be proven guilty or innocent, every human is intitled to have a lawyer and a lawyer is educated to defend whatever their position may be. Breivik’s lawyer is forced to defend and help him be proven guilty by whatever means necessary as every person has their right to explain, putting his personal emotions as well as his family, friends and loved one to the people he killed. His possession of knowledge of being a lawyer was taken place, as he put is emotional opinion at the side when his professional favor is demanded.

A person’s life is valuable, and having to put it in risk makes many situations ethical reasoning alter. People’s emotions become stronger once their life gets called into question, we become defensive and protective although this changes our moral attitude and makes our values differ. Often our emotions become strongest when protecting a human and that can either be by using your knowledge to help another individual from getting hurt or upset or retaining it for their safety or your own. For example, seeing a person getting stabbed on the streets and almost at the point of death, walking away and retaining the information to yourself instead of reporting it to the police. Using the evolutionary argument from the self interest theory suggest that we would help ourselves in order to be safe, but this leaves the other human almost dead. Preventing the situation from getting worse or even happening again by going to the police but instead keeping the information to oneself.

Humans reactions once their life gets put into question changes, there is the fear of punishment argument where one can be in fear of being hurt by the same gang if situations arise with police. The person watching this act may have also been through the same situation and knowing there is no way of ameliorating it. Nonetheless, even though situation can mean that you get hurt the hidden benefits such as knowing you did the right action and nothing could make the situation a feeling of knowing you tried to help someone would occur. Another person’s life is more valuable, having the knowledge of knowing what the moral task is means that your responsibility is to save attempt to save another persons life would be looked from a social point of view the morally correct thing to do.

Overall judging from the points given and thoroughly looked upon, having the possession of knowledge does require an ethical responsibility. There are many situations where different areas of knowledge affect different way of knowledge. Our human understanding of situations differ therefore the moral grounds are not always in favor of the correct thing to do. With professions such as lawyers and doctors, putting the clients life first is the most important no matter what actions occurred, right or wrong. In a humans view, our instinct is to protect ourselves before others in other words, survival of the fittest. Although everyday we obtain vast amounts of knowledge we continuously debate whether what the ethically moral standpoint is and do follow the correct path which assures our responsibilities.